

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 EA-10 ICAE-00

L-03 NSCE-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03

INR-10 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - T E X T (P A R A 4 .)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ESCAP, OCON, ETRD

SUBJECT: ESCAP MEETING OF MINISTERS OF TRADE

1. SUMMARY: SENIOR OFFICIALS PORTION OF MEETING CONCLUDED SUNDAY AFTERNOON AFTER LONG AND SOMETIMES DIFFICULT NEGOTIATION OF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE SUBMITTED TO MINISTERS. MOST U.S. POSITIONS COVERED BY ASEAN AND JAPANESE INTERVENTIONS. MAJOR ISSUE AROSE REGARDING PARTICIPATION OF NONREGIONAL ESCAP MEMBERS IN PROPOSED TRADE COOPERATION GROUP. REQUEST DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE. END SUMMARY

2. TWENTY-SEVEN MEMBER COUNTRIES ATTENDED SENIOR OFFICIALS PORTION OF CONFERENCE ON TRADE. STATEMENTS REFLECTED RECOGNITION OF DIFFICULTIES IN ACHIEVING SUCCESS IN SUCH AN ALL ENCOMPASSING PROGRAM AS THAT PROPOSED IN BLUEPRINT. MANY COUNTRIES EXPRESSED DESIRE FOR REALISM, FLEXIBILITY, STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH. WHILE THERE WAS SOME VERY LOW KEY MENTION OF PROTECTIONISM, STATEMENTS GENERALLY STUCK TO ANALYSIS OF BLUEPRINT. U.S. MADE BRIEF STATEMENT EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EFFORT WITH CERTAIN CAVEATS. MANY DELS EXPRESSED DESIRE TO AWAIT OUTCOME OF MTN AND COMMON FUND NEGOTIATIONS BEFORE BEGINNING REGIONAL TALKS ON THESE ISSUES.

3. DURING NEGOTIATION OF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE SUBMITTED TO MINISTERS FOR APPROVAL, DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN REGIONAL COUNTRIES REGARDING SCOPE OF PROGRAM WERE OBVIOUS.

JAPAN AND ASEAN COUNTRIES INTERESTED IN LIMITING SCOPE OF PROGRAM AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, WHILE INDIA TRIED TO MAKE IT AS WIDE AS POSSIBLE.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDE CONSIDERATION OF:

(1) ESTABLISHMENT OF CONTINUING PROGRAM FOR INFORMATION DISSEMINATION UTILIZING EXISTING ESCAP RESOURCES AND INSTITUTIONS;
(2) HARMONIZATION OF TRADE STATISTICS, CUSTOMS TARIFF NOMENCLATURE;
(3) PROMOTION OF TRADE CREATING JOINT VENTURES;
(4) IMPROVEMENT OF TRANSPORT FACILITIES;
(5) PROMOTION OF LONG TERM CONTRACTS;
(6) PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE TO COMMODITY ASSOCIATIONS/COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST TO THE REGION;
(7) IMPROVEMENT OF MONETARY AND CREDIT COOPERATION; AND
(8) REDUCTION, REMOVAL OR MODIFICATION OF TARIFF AND NON-TARIFF BARRIERS AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME. RECOMMENDATIONS STATE THAT "SUCH COOPERATION SHOULD BE TRADE CREATING AND SHOULD NOT BE INCONSISTENT WITH INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS OF THE PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES." ALSO STATES THAT "PROGRAM WOULD FURTHER PROMOTE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER", WITH NO REFERENCE TO RESOLUTIONS OF SIXTH SPECIAL SESSION EXCEPT IN REPORT OF MEETING.
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5. ONLY CONCRETE PROPOSAL IN DOCUMENT IS ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRADE COOPERATION GROUP (TCG) WHICH WILL FORMULATE AND DETERMINE WAYS OF IMPLEMENTING PROGRAM. TCG WILL REPORT TO TRADE COMMITTEE. IT WAS OBVIOUS AT OUTSET THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS GROUP WAS MAIN OBJECTIVE OF MEETING, SO WE DID NOT ATTEMPT TO PREVENT IT. UNEXPECTED BATTLE AROSE WHEN ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO EXCLUDE NONREGIONAL ESCAP MEMBERS FROM THIS GROUP. ARGUMENT FOR EXCLUSION IS THAT PROGRAM IS FOR EXPANSION OF INTRA-REGIONAL TRADE AND NONREGIONAL MEMBERS WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO IMPLEMENT IT. HOWEVER, ALL NONREGIONALS (AS WELL AS MONGOLIA) ARGUED STRONGLY FOR INCLUSION, SINCE GROUP WILL BE FORMED UNDER AUSPICES OF ESCAP AND SOME ASPECTS OF PROGRAM, SUCH AS INFORMATION NETWORK, WILL UTILIZE ESCAP FACILITIES. FURTHERMORE, AS FULL MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION, WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY SUBGROUP. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, IT APPEARED THAT ISSUE WAS RESOLVED IN OUR FAVOR BUT IT KEPT CROPPING UP AGAIN. FINAL REPORT GIVES NONREGIONALS MEMBERSHIP, BUT ISSUE MAY BE REOPENED DURING MINISTERIAL SESSION. IT APPEARS FROM OUR INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS WITH OTHER DELS THAT SECRETARIAT IS MAJOR FORCE TRYING TO KEEP NONREGIONALS OUT. NO REGIONAL MEMBERS APPEAR TO HAVE STRONG FEELINGS,

ALTHOUGH THAI DEL SAID ASEAN POSITION WAS THAT NONREGIONALS SHOULD BE "ASSOCIATE MEMBERS" (WHICH WOULD CREATE BUREAUCRATIC DIFFICULTIES CONSIDERING THERE ARE REGIONAL COUNTRIES WHICH ARE ONLY ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF ESCAP, WHILE ALL NON-REGIONALS ARE FULL MEMBERS). MALAYSIAN DEL, HOWEVER, SAID HE WAS IN FAVOR OF OUR MEMBERSHIP.

6. EXPECT DISCUSSION OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY MINISTERS TO BEGIN TUESDAY. UNLESS INSTRUCTED OTHERWISE BY TUESDAY AM DELHI TIME (MONDAY PM WASHINGTON TIME) WE PLAN TO CONTINUE TO INSIST ON FULL MEMBERSHIP IN TCG. IF STRONG OPINION AGAINST THIS DEVELOPS, MAY CAUSE A PROBLEM, SINCE ESCAP DOES NOT VOTE (AND DOCUMENT IS NOT A RESOLUTION) BUT BELIEVE PRINCIPLE INVOLVED IS VERY IMPORTANT AND WE WISH TO AVOID SETTING A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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